

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3077

To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish a counseling program for certain survivor of veterans deceased as the result of suicide.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 2, 2023

Mr. VAN DREW introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish a counseling program for certain survivor of veterans deceased as the result of suicide.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Green Star Families
5 Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. COUNSELING PROGRAM FOR CERTAIN FAMILY**
2 **MEMBERS AND CAREGIVERS OF VETERANS**
3 **DECEASED AS A RESULT OF SUICIDE.**

4 (a) COUNSELING PROGRAM.—Subchapter II of chap-
5 ter 17 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by add-
6 ing at the end the following new section:

7 **“§ 1720K. Counseling program for certain family**
8 **members and caregivers of veterans de-**
9 **ceased as a result of suicide**

10 “(a) COUNSELING PROGRAM.—(1) Subject to para-
11 graph (2), the Secretary shall furnish, at no cost to the
12 recipient, counseling services to—

13 “(A) the next of kin of covered veterans; and

14 “(B) former volunteer caregivers of covered vet-
15 erans.

16 “(2) The Secretary may provide counseling services
17 under this section only if the Secretary determines such
18 counseling services are—

19 “(A) reasonably accessible to the an individual
20 described in paragraph (1); and

21 “(B) substantially equivalent or superior to
22 similar services furnished by the Secretary to an in-
23 dividual described in paragraph (1).

24 “(3) To carry out subsection (a), the Secretary may
25 enter into an agreement with a Federal, State, or private

1 entity. The Secretary may provide fair compensation to
2 such entity pursuant to such agreement.

3 “(b) PUBLIC AWARENESS.—In carrying out the pro-
4 gram under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

5 “(1) publish information relating to the pro-
6 gram on an internet website of the Department; and

7 “(2) provide information relating to the pro-
8 gram to any individual described in paragraph (1).

9 “(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

10 “(1) The terms ‘covered veteran’ and ‘next of
11 kin’ has the meaning given that term in section 904
12 of title 36.

13 “(2) The term ‘covered veterans service organi-
14 zation’ includes—

15 “(A) an organization recognized by the
16 Secretary for the representation of veterans
17 under section 5902 of this title; and

18 “(B) an organization—

19 “(i) that is described in section
20 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(19) of the Internal
21 Revenue Code of 1986 and is exempt from
22 taxation under section 501(a) of such
23 Code; and

24 “(ii) that carries out activities relating
25 to veterans and their assistance.

1 “(3) The term ‘family member’ means, with re-
2 spect to a covered veteran, an individual—

3 “(A) who is a member of the family of the
4 veteran, including—

5 “(i) a parent or legal guardian;

6 “(ii) a spouse;

7 “(iii) a child;

8 “(iv) a step-family member; and

9 “(v) an extended family member; or

10 “(B) who, prior to the death of the covered
11 veteran, lived with the covered veteran.

12 “(4) The term ‘former volunteer caregiver’
13 means, with respect to a covered veteran, an indi-
14 vidual—

15 “(A) who is at least 18 years of age; and

16 “(B) who, prior to the death of the covered
17 veteran, and in connection with a covered vet-
18 erans service organization, furnished the cov-
19 ered veteran with counseling, social work, or
20 other personal care services—

21 “(i) without compensation to such in-
22 dividual; and

23 “(ii) for a period of at least three
24 months.

1 “(5) The term ‘personal care services’ has the
2 meaning given that term in section 1720G of this
3 title.”.

4 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
5 at the beginning of subchapter II of chapter 17 of such
6 title is amended by inserting, after the item relating to
7 section 1720J, the following new item:

 “1720K. Counseling program for certain family members and caregivers of veterans deceased as a result of suicide.”.

8 (c) IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE.—The Secretary of
9 Veterans Affairs shall carry out section 1720K of such
10 title, as added by subsection (a), by not later than 90 days
11 after the date of the enactment of this Act.

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